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Calendar of conferences and meetings: improved utilization of conference-servicing resources: meeting statistics of United Nations organs

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Annex I to the present document contains statistical data on the planned and actual utilization of conference resources allocated to a core sample of bodies that met in New York, Geneva and Vienna in 1997, compiled in accordance with the experimental methodology adopted as final by the Committee on Conferences at its 348th meeting, on 18 May 1993. The data include compliance and availability indices for assessing compliance with the deadlines for the submission of pre-session documentation and availability of such documentation for bodies based in New York, Geneva and Vienna, which were proposed by the Committee on Conferences at its substantive session of 1992.

2. In addition, data on utilization and availability of documentation at Nairobi are included, although information on late starting and early ending at that venue will be available as from 1999 only.

3. Annex II contains an analysis of the statistics, including the overall utilization factor, and a breakdown in terms of percentages of the meeting ratio and planning accuracy factor of the bodies in the sample.

4. In general, the bodies in the sample meet on a regular basis, and it may be assumed that their performance is a reflection of United Nations bodies as a whole. Clearly, however, such indicators as the utilization factor can depend on particulars that do not apply to all United Nations bodies.

5. In accordance with decisions of the Committee on Conferences, the time utilized for informal meetings or consultations held before the start or after the adjournment of officially scheduled meetings is not included as time lost owing to late starting or early ending of meetings.

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6. An explanation of column headings that appear in the annexes follows:

A Number of meetings planned by a given organ at a scheduled session;

B Number of additional meetings held during the session;

C Number of meetings cancelled during the session;

D Number of meetings actually held;

E Number of unrelated reassignments;

F Amount of time lost owing to late starting/early ending (hours and minutes rounded to the nearest five minutes, e.g., 5.25 = 5 hours and 25 minutes);

MR Meeting ratio, calculated as meetings held as a percentage of meetings available to a given body (D as a percentage of A);

PAF Planning accuracy factor, calculated as meetings planned, minus additional meetings, minus cancellations, all as a percentage of meetings planned (A minus B minus C as a percentage of A);

UF Utilization factor, the percentage of available conference resources actually used by the organ in question. The utilization factor is based on the following calculation:

$$\frac{(A+B) - (C-E) - (F/3)}{(A+B)} = UF$$

In the foregoing calculation, the number of hours lost as a result of late starting and early ending is converted into the equivalent of meetings lost by dividing the total by three, as the standard meeting time is three hours. The number of unrelated assignments is subtracted from the number of cancelled meetings. The difference between the two and the number of meetings lost are then subtracted from the sum of meetings planned and additional meetings held. The result is expressed as a percentage of the sum of meetings planned and additional meetings held;

CI Compliance index, calculated as the percentage of pre-session documentation issued in accordance with the six-week rule;

AI Availability index, calculated as the actual rate of delivery presented on a week-by-week basis.

Annex I

Statistical data on the planned and actual utilization of conference resources allocated

A. New York

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	AI Issued by end of week: CI	6	5	4	3	2	1
Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean 30 June–2 July	6	0	3	3	2	1.45/2.05	50	50	62							
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) 4 February–27 March	72	0	9	63	2	5.20/41.30	88	88	69							
ACABQ 6 May–1 August	123	0	15	108	5	7.15/36.50	88	88	80							
ACABQ 2–19 September	20	0	1	19	1	2.10/10.55	95	95	78							
ACABQ 22 September–19 December	134	0	20	114	8	10.20/53.55	85	85	75							
Commission on Population and Development, thirtieth session 24–28 February	10	0	2	8	2	1.50/4.10	80	80	80	0	9	9	28	9	28	17
Commission for Social Development, thirty-fifth session 25 February–6 March	16	0	0	16	0	4.55/2.35	100	100	84	20	0	0	0	14	20	33
Commission on the Status of Women, forty-first session 10–21 March	24	1	1	24	0	5.50/1.50	100	92	86	9	0	0	0	9	9	73
Commission on Sustainable Development – Working Group on Agenda 21 24 February–7 March	20	0	0	20	0	6.30/6.25	100	100	78	0	0	0	33	0	67	0
Commission on Sustainable Development 7–25 April	55	4	2	57	0	15.30/4.15	104	89	85	67	10	0	4	2	2	10
Committee on Conferences 25–28 August	6	0	1	5	1	0.20/0	83	83	98	40	0	0	10	10	10	30
Committee on Contributions, fifty-seventh session 27 May–20 June	30	1	3	28	2	7.50/1.35	93	87	87	0	0	29	14	14	14	29

A/AC.172/1998/3

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Committee on Information, nineteenth session, first part 13–19 May	5	2	0	7	0	3.25/2.25	140	60	72	22	0	0	0	34	22	22
Committee on Information, nineteenth session, second part 3–8 September	6	0	5	1	3	0.30/2	17	17	53							
Committee for Programme and Coordination, thirty-seventh session 9 June–3 July	38	6	3	41	0	11.15/3.15	108	76	82	60	20	0	0	0	0	20
Economic and Social Council, organizational session 4–7 February	8	1	4	5	3	0.30/1.30	63	38	81	0	0	0	0	60	20	20
Economic and Social Council, resumed organizational session 1–2 May	4	0	0	4	0	1.35/3.50	100	100	55	40	0	0	20	20	20	0
General Assembly, resumed fifty-first session, Fifth Committee 10–27 March	28	8	0	36	0	7.20/2.20	129	71	91	0	33	0	0	0	33	0
General Assembly, resumed fifty-first session, Fifth Committee 12 May–6 June	56	1	6	51	2	15.30/11.55	91	88	77	0	0	0	0	0	14	0
General Assembly, resumed fifty-first session, Fifth Committee 8–12 September	10	4	0	14	0	5/1.20	140	60	85	0	0	25	25	25	25	0
General Assembly, fifty-second session, plenary	125	10	34	101	13	20.55/38.20	81	65	70							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, First Committee	34	0	3	31	2	10.10/24.50	91	91	63							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)	31	1	7	25	4	4/18.40	81	74	67							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, Second Committee	71	12	8	75	5	25.40/17.25	106	72	79							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, Third Committee	60	5	14	51	11	9.10/26.15	85	68	77							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, Fifth Committee	113	28	16	125	9	42.30/23	111	61	80							
General Assembly, fifty-second session, Sixth Committee	71	5	11	65	6	13.50/8.40	92	77	84							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	AI Issued by end of week: CI	6	5	4	3	2	1
Human Rights Committee – Working Group on Communication 17–21 March	10	0	1	9	1	3.10/1.40	90	90	84							
Human Rights Committee, fifty-ninth session 24 March–11 April	28	0	1	27	0	7.40/1	96	96	86	27	12	0	13	15	17	16
International Civil Service Commission, forty-sixth session 14–25 July	18	1	2	17	0	4.35/0	94	83	81	0	0	0	13	0	25	50
Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization 27 January–7 February	20	0	4	16	2	5.10/5.40	80	80	72							
Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations 10 April–2 May	32	2	3	31	0	8.05/6.25	97	84	77							
Statistical Commission, twenty-ninth session 11–14 February	8	0	1	7	0	1/1.40	88	88	76	18	0	18	21	18	4	21
United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) – Working Group on Electronic Commerce, thirty-first session 18–28 February	16	0	1	15	0	2.50/0	94	94	88	0	17	0	83	0	0	0
UNCITRAL – Working Group on Insolvency Law, twenty-first session 20–31 January	18	0	1	17	0	3.40	94	94	88	85	8	7	0	0	0	0
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – Executive Board, first regular session 20–24 January	10	0	1	9	0	1.45/1.50	90	90	78	35	40	20	5	0	0	0
UNICEF – Executive Board, second regular session 18–19 March	4	0	0	4	0	0.40/0	100	100	94	0	74	13	0	13	0	0
UNICEF – Executive Board, annual session 2–6 June	10	0	1	9	0	2.40/2.40	90	90	72	18	0	0	9	64	9	0
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – Executive Board, first regular session 13–17 January	10	1	0	11	0	1.05/.50	110	90	94	25	25	37	0	0	13	0
UNDP/UNFPA – Executive Board, second regular session 10–14 March	10	0	0	10	0	2.05/0	100	100	93	25	0	0	13	50	12	0
UNDP/UNFPA – Executive Board, annual session 12–23 May	20	0	2	18	1	4.15/.10	90	90	88	20	12	8	24	12	16	4

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	CI	AI Issued by end of week: 6	5	4	3	2	1
UNDP/UNFPA – Executive Board, third regular session 15–19 September	10	1	0	11	0	1.45/0.15	110	90	94	17	22	11	17	0	5	22
B. Geneva																
Committee against Torture, eighteenth session 28 April–9 May	18	0	0	18	0	1.35/2.05	100	100	93	54	11	6	0	3	8	18
Committee against Torture, nineteenth session 12–21 November	20	0	1	19	0	2.10/1.50	95	95	88	28	21	13	27	0	0	11
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, sixteenth session 28 April–16 May	28	0	2	26	0	0.50/0.50	93	93	91	96	0	0	1	3	0	0
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, seventeenth session 17 November–5 December	30	0	2	28	0	2.25/1.05	93	93	89	34	3	0	0	0	0	63
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, fiftieth session 3–21 March	30	0	0	30	0	1/1.05	100	100	98	48	5	21	12	9	5	0
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, fifty-first session 4–22 August	31	1	0	32	0	0.25/1.05	103	97	98	75	7	1	0	1	6	10
Committee on the Rights of the Child, fourteenth session 6–24 January	30	0	2	28	0	5.05/3.55	93	93	83	41	8	7	0	44	0	0
Committee on the Rights of the Child, fifteenth session 20 May–6 June	28	0	1	27	0	3.10/2.25	96	96	90	15	6	0	44	0	12	23
Committee on the Rights of the Child, sixteenth session 22 September–10 October	30	0	2	28	0	1.50/1.50	93	93	89	50	50	0	0	0	0	0
Economic and Social Council, substantive session 30 June–25 July	72	1	12	61	0	13/22.10	85	82	68	0	0	0	51	33	0	16
Human Rights Commission, fifty-third session 10 March–18 April	54	21	1	74	0	18.50/4.10	137	59	88	15	16	7	12	17	13	15
Human Rights Committee, sixtieth session 14 July–1 August	30	0	1	29	0	2.45/1.55	97	97	91	33	18	7	0	0	14	28

											AI					
											Issued by end of week					
	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	CI	6	5	4	3	2	1
Human Rights Committee, sixty-first session 20 October–7 November	30	0	1	29	0	3 15/ 40	97	97	92	93	1	5	0	1	0	0
International Law Commission, forty-ninth session 12 May–18 July	79	2	0	81	0	2 40/4 05	103	97	97							
Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 17–19 February	6	0	2	4	0	0 55/3.05	67	67	44							
Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 28–29 May	4	0	2	2	0	0 00/0 55	50	50	42							
Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 25–29 August	10	0	3	7	0	2 25/5 20	70	70	44	0	0	0	0	35	30	35
Subcommittee of Experts on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods 7–17 July	10	0	0	10	0	0 45/1 45	100	100	92	39	3	58	0	0	0	0
Subcommittee of Experts on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods 8–18 December	18	0	0	18	0	0 15/2 25	100	100	95	4	10	15	39	15	17	0
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – Trade and Development Board, forty-fourth session 13–24 October	20	2	0	22	0	5 05/7 25	110	90	81	15	35	19	30	0	0	0
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Executive Committee, forty-eighth session 12 May–18 July	11	0	1	10	0	1 15/3 55	91	91	75							
C. Vienna																
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, sixth session 28 April–9 May	16	0	0	16	0	3 10/ 10	100	100	93	10	3	15	6	9	25	31
Commission on Narcotic Drugs, fortieth session 18–25 March	12	0	0	12	0	2 25/5	100	100	79	2	6	8	12	8	20	44

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Acting as the Preparatory Body for the special session of the General Assembly on drugs 26–27 March	8	0	0	8	0	2.35/3	100	100	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) – Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, thirty-fourth session 17–28 February	18	0	0	18	0	2.50/4	100	100	87	16	9	9	15	25	15	11
COPUOS – Legal Subcommittee, thirty-sixth session 1–18 April	11	0	0	11	0	2.40/7	100	100	71	82	9	0	4	0	0	4
COPUOS, fortieth session 2–13 June	12	0	1	11	0	2.10/6.20	92	92	68	96	0	0	0	0	0	4
International Narcotics Control Board, sixty-second session 5–16 May	20	0	0	20	0	1.15/.20	100	100	97	13	5	0	31	0	6	44
International Narcotics Control Board, sixty-third session 3–20 November	28	0	0	28	0	0.45/0.25	100	100	99	5	0	8	15	10	18	44
UNCITRAL, thirtieth session 12–30 May	26	0	1	25	0	4.15/2.55	96	96	87	68	5	5	6	0	5	11
UNCITRAL – Working Group on International Control Practices 20–31 October	16	0	1	15	0	1.40/1.45	94	94	87	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, forty-sixth session 16–20 June	16	0	0	16	0	0.05/3.35	100	100	92	55	36	9	0	0	0	0

D. Nairobi

Commission on Human Settlements, sixteenth session, pre-session consultations 21–25 April	10	0	0	10	0		100	100								
Commission on Human Settlements, sixteenth session 28 April–7 May	32	0	0	32	0		100	100		49	6	6	3	2	6	28

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	CI	Al Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Governing Council, nineteenth session 27 January–7 February	34	2	0	36	0		106	94		51	27	5	3	11	0	3
UNEP – Governing Council, resumed nineteenth session 2–4 April	6	0	0	6	0		100	100								

Annex II

Analysis of the statistics

1. The overall utilization factor for 1997 was 81 per cent. This figure is computed by totalling the data in the six columns for all bodies in the three locations and treating them as if they reflected a single body, as follows:

Duty station	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F (minutes)*	*UF*
New York	1 400	94	186	1 308	85	39 920	78
Geneva	589	27	33	583	—	8 615	87
Vienna	183	0	3	180	—	3 500	88
	2 172	121	222	2 071	85	52 035	81

2. The overall utilization factor for 1997 shows a slight decline of 2 points against the same factor for 1996 (83 per cent), as reported in paragraph 1 of the report of the Secretary-General of 29 July 1997 (A/AC.172/1997/3). The decrease of 3 points in the utilization factor in New York in 1997 as against 1996 (78 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively) is largely due to the reduction in utilization, of from 3 to 19 points, on the part of the General Assembly and its Main Committees.

3. The utilization factors for the bodies in the sample for the period from 1995-1997 are presented below in tabular form for purposes of comparison:

Utilization factor (percentage)	*Number of sessions*		
	1995	*1996*	*1997*
0–19	—	—	—
20–29	1	—	—
30–39	1	—	—
40–49	1	—	3
50–59	6	—	2
60–69	11	5	6
70–79	18	12	17
80–100	44	60	46
Total number	**82**	**78**	**74**

4. In 1995 and 1996, 4 per cent and 1 per cent of the bodies, respectively, fell in the lowest range of 0-49 per cent. In 1997, 4 per cent of the bodies fell in that range. In 1995 and 1996, 43 per cent and 22 per cent of the bodies, respectively, used 50 to 79 per cent of their resources; in 1997, 34 per cent of the bodies did so. As to compliance with the benchmark, in 1995 and 1996, 54 per cent and 77 per cent of the bodies, respectively, had a utilization factor of 80 per cent or higher. In 1997, 62 per cent of the bodies in the sample utilized 80 per cent or more of their conference-servicing resources.

5. The figures are summarized as follows:

Percentage of resources utilized	*Percentage of sessions held*		
	1995	*1996*	*1997*
80–100	54	77	62
50–79	43	22	34
0–49	4	1	4

6. The following is a breakdown of the meeting ratios of the bodies in the sample for 1997, including Nairobi:

Percentage	*Number of sessions*
10–19	1
20–29	—
30–39	—
40–49	—
50–59	2
60–69	2
70–79	1
80–89	11
90–100+	61
Total	**78**

7. Thus, in 1997, 8 per cent of the bodies in the sample had meeting ratios below 80 per cent; 92 per cent had meeting ratios above 80 per cent. Seventy-eight per cent of the bodies had meeting ratios of 90 per cent or higher, or an increase of 4 per cent over 1996.

8. The following is a breakdown of the planning accuracy factors of the bodies in the sample for 1997, including Nairobi:

Percentage	*Number of sessions*
0–39	2
40–49	—
50–59	3
60–69	6
70–79	6
80–89	14
90–100	47
Total	**78**

9. Thus, in 1997, 22 per cent of the bodies had planning accuracy factors below 80 per cent; 78 per cent of the bodies had factors above 80 per cent. Sixty per cent of the bodies had planning accuracy factors of 90 to 100 per cent, or an increase of 1 per cent over 1996.